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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
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RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 7835
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 2179
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 1678
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 5757
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 5502
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2128
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
RHMFIUU/USDOCO 6ATAF IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39OSS INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 523 IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 522 INCIRLIK AB TU
RUEUITH/AFLO ANKARA TU

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 000384

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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2007

In Today's Papers

AKP Government Re-Shapes Article 301

Sabah, Hurriyet: The draft amendment of Article 301 of Turkish Penal Code, the law that makes it a crime to "insult Turkishness," will be discussed at the cabinet next week and then it will be sent to the Parliament for approval. The draft reportedly changes the term "Turkishness" to "Turkish Nation" and also introduces the condition that prosecutors should get permission from the Justice Ministry before filing a court case based on this article. Also, the highest penalty to be given based on the article is pulled down to two years from three years. Justice Minister Cemil Cicek, reportedly, is not favorable to these recommendations for amendments.

DTP Head Makes Controversial Statement on Kirkuk

Hurriyet, Milliyet, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Zaman and others report Hilmrdisd tQned to work with Turkey and the US in fight against the PKK. In other words, the US is while supporting Kurdish leaders with a language in disbelief to General Buyukanit, at the same time implying that Turkey should start a dialogue with the Kurdish leaders in Northern Iraq. This proves that there are very serious problems not only between Turkey and Iraqi Kurds, but between Turkey and the US as well. Would it be possible to claim that General Buyukanit's meetings in Washington were very successful under these circumstances?"

ANKARA 00000384 002 OF 003

Turkish Parliamentary Efforts to Halt the Passage of Armenian Resolution

Yeni Safak, Sabah: A Turkish Parliamentary delegation attending NATO Parliamentary Assembly meetings in Brussels cautioned the US Congressional delegation about the negative impacts of issuance of the draft Armenian resolution by the US Congress, on bilateral

relations. Head of the Turkish delegation Vahit Erdem gave the message of evolution and developments in Iraq. On the request of the Parliamentarians, Foreign Minister Gul instructed his staff to draft the letter.

Editorial Comment: Iran's Nuclear Program

Fikret Ertan observes in the Islamist-intellectual Zaman: "In their latest statements, Iranian President Ahmedinejad and other officials, vowed to pursue the uranium enrichment program despite the UN deadline. As a matter of fact, Iran managed to advance in this program using 'time gaining' policies. Last year Iran managed to enrich crude uranium by 3.5 percent and reached the desired stage in producing civilian nuclear oil. Iran had to face international reaction several times in the past for its nuclear program. Ignoring the UN Security Council deadline was Iran's last step in the Iran-UN crisis. The main issue here is, despite the UN, IAEA and others, Iran has almost reached the point where it wanted to reach."

TV Highlights
NTV, 6.00 A.M.

Domestic News

- A moderate earthquake measuring 5.9 on the Richter scale rattled the eastern province of Elazig on Wednesday afternoon, damaging several buildings. No casualties have been reported so far. The earthquake was also felt in the neighboring provinces of Malatya, Diyarbakir and Adiyaman.
- Interior Minister Abdulkadir Aksu said security forces will not tolerate provocations at Women's Day and Nevruz celebrations in March.
- Prime Minister Erdogan accused The High Education Board (YOK) of obstructing science by not allowing the opening of ten new universities.
- Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul will travel to Islamabad on February 25 to meet with his counterparts from six other Muslim countries to discuss problems in the Middle East.
- The Turkish Parliament approved Wednesday a long-delayed law to allow the introduction of mortgages, which is expected to benefit the banking and real estate sectors. Deputy Prime Minister Abdullatif Sener said mortgages would allow for longer term loans and lower rates, but added low earners were unlikely to benefit from the law.
- The PKK's imprisoned leader Abdullah Ocalan's book "Prison Without Walls" will be able to be published in Turkey.

ANKARA 00000384 003 OF 003

to produce and sell crude oil and gas extracted in Iran.

- Greek Cypriot leader Papadopoulos, given a cold reception in Athens regarding the oil exploration dispute with Turkey, said the Greek Cypriots did not have to seek consensus with Athens in every issue.
- The Armenian parliament has passed a law allowing diaspora Armenians to vote in Armenian elections.
- Prime Minister Tony Blair said Britain will withdraw 1,600 troops from Iraq in the "coming months" if Iraqi forces can secure the southern part of the country.

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

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